

Fine Arts - Theatre Course Descriptive Guide

First Grade [1997]

Course Description

The curriculum is written to aid the teacher and student to facilitate the learning of theatre as an art form. Four standards are included: playmaking, acting, understanding art forms (not introduced until fourth grade), analyzing and constructing meanings (not introduced until fourth grade). One, two, three, or all four standards may be addressed in every theatre lesson plan. In theatre, the emphasis is always on engaging the child in-role through the four essential processes of planning, playing, examining, and evaluating. Theatre classes may last from 15 to 90 minutes based on grade level, amount of curriculum integration, and complexity of lesson planning ranging from simple drama exercises to fully developed classroom dramatizations (which may take days or weeks to complete). Although sharing theatre work within a class or occasionally with other classes is an acceptable part of the process at all grade levels, staging plays for public audiences is NOT a priority, especially prior to the fourth grade.

Core Standards of the Course

TOPIC: Playmaking

STANDARD:

The student will plan and improvise plays based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history for informal and formal theatre.

OBJECTIVES:

Plan, with the teacher, actions for all characters that make sense considering the given circumstances of a story.

- Plan and pantomime, individually or in pairs, the actions of major characters in a poem or nursery rhyme as the teacher tells or reads it aloud.

Strategy Example:

In Hickory, Dickory Dock, have students pantomime a mouse running up an imaginary clock and then running down when the clock strikes one. In pairs, have students plan how to have one play the clock and one play the mouse.

- Plan and pantomime, individually or in pairs, the actions of major characters in a story as the teacher tells or reads it aloud.

Strategy Example:

In Three Billy Goats Gruff, have students, individually but simultaneously with the rest of the class, pantomime the actions of either a billy goat or a troll as you tell or read the story aloud. Repeat and have them switch roles.

Plan, with the teacher, dialogue and physical attributes that make sense for all characters considering the given circumstances of a specific story.

- Use selected body movements and gestures to create characters from a familiar story when working together to dramatize that story.

Strategy Example:

In Three Billy Goats Gruff, have students create face puppets out of paper plates. One hand will be a billy goat and the other a troll. Students then pantomime the actions of both characters as you tell or read the story aloud. (See Dance Core.)

- Use simple dialogue to create characters when planning and improvising a scene based on, but not in, a familiar story.

Strategy Example:

In Three Billy Goats Gruff, you play a troll in-role, and as the students approach your bridge one at a time, they must create a couple of sentences of dialogue to persuade you to let them cross safely. For example, a student might say, "I'm going shopping and I'll bring you something good to eat when I return."

Encourage original responses, no repeats.

Plan, with the teacher, the proper sequence of events occurring in a story. (See Language Arts Core.)

- Construct several dramatic tableaux representing the proper sequence of events in a familiar nursery rhyme.

Strategy Example:

In Jack and Jill, have the students work in pairs. Each tableau will show one important part of the nursery rhyme; e.g., frozen in a tableau depicting them rolling down the hill.

- Construct face puppets and enact nursery rhymes by creating brief puppet scenes representing the proper sequence of events in a familiar story.

Strategy Example:

In Jack and Jill, have students play out the tableau scenes they have created in the preceding strategy example. As they are playing out the scene in pairs, have them freeze momentarily when they reach the tableau moment in each scene.

TOPIC: Acting

STANDARD:

A student will cooperate, imagine and assume roles, explore personal preferences and meanings, and interact in classroom dramatizations.

OBJECTIVES:

Develop body awareness and spatial perception through movement and pantomime. (See Dance Core.)

- Move isolated body parts to a random drum beat.

Strategy Example:

Tell the students to imagine they are made of popcorn. Have them "pop" on the drum beats as you beat the drum. First the head pops, then hands, fingers, eyes, etc.

- Use the entire body to move in space; respect the space of others.

Strategy Example:

Distribute scarves. Have students move to music as the teacher instructs them to move the scarves high, low, beside, behind, all about, etc.

- Pantomime the effect of changing conditions on movements.

Strategy Example:

Tell students they are flat or deflated balloons resting on the floor. Pretend to slowly fill with air, try to float away, a wind comes up, a hail storm, etc.

- Pantomime physical transformations, things changing from one thing to another. (See Science Core.)

Strategy Example:

Have students move about pretending to be a meandering stream of water. Then, as the sun goes down and the temperature drops below freezing, have them slowly freeze and turn into ice. As the sun rises the next morning, very slowly, the ice melts and they become a stream of water again.

Develop expressive use of the voice.

- Create sound effects with voice for a story.

Strategy Example:

You might make up a story about two children who discover a baby bird that has fallen out of the nest. Mother bird is flying frantically above. A cat is approaching. The rescue is on. Have the students fill in the sounds while you tell the story.

- Create a scene using animal sounding dialogue based on a story.

Strategy Example:

You might repeat the same story told in the preceding strategy example. This time have the students listen to the entire story. In groups of three, have students improvise scene where they create animal sounding dialogue for the main characters appropriate for the circumstances presented in the story.

Develop sensory awareness for the sense of touch and the sense of sight.

- Use clues from the sense of touch to describe objects.

Strategy Example:

Create a touch box with a curtain in front and an opening in back so objects can be put in from behind. Students reach through the curtain in front and touch things they cannot see. Each child first must describe texture, shape, and size, then name the object.

- Observe details about another person.

Strategy Example:

In pairs, have each partner look closely for a few seconds at what the other partner is wearing. Have them turn away from each other. Partners then change one detail such as removing a shoelace, buttoning a top button, putting a watch on the other hand. Both partners again face each other and again are asked to describe what has changed.